



# Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

## INSIDE

## Obama Calls for a New Beginning with Muslims Around



President Obama

By Merle David Kellerhals, Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — Saying he came to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, President Obama told an audience in Cairo June 4 that the cycle of suspicion and discord that has defined the relationship for so long must end.

Obama said he seeks a new start that is based on mutual interest and mutual respect — “one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles, principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings.”

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## Renovated Wahil Clinic to Improve Community Health Care

Dire Dawa, Ethiopia — American and Ethiopian partners dedicated a newly renovated health clinic at Wahil, outside Dire Dawa, on May 27, 2009. Service members of the United States’ Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) worked with local contractors, Yauuea Construction Company, PLT, to renovate the clinic as part of our two countries’ ongoing partnership to improve health care and liveli-



Dr. Tsigereda Kifle, Head of the Dire Dawa Health Bureau, and Ambassador Yamamoto cut the ribbon to open the Wahil health clinic.

hoods for local communities.

At the dedication ceremony, United States Ambassador to Ethiopia, Donald Yamamoto, stressed the importance of working together to improve health infrastructure. Echoing his words, Colonel Lorrie Oldham of CJTF-HOA said this project demonstrates the positive benefits of the Ethiopian-American partnership and the benefits it brings to the lives of

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"There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground," Obama said.

"So long as our relationship is defined by our differences, we will empower those who sow hatred rather than peace, those who promote conflict rather than cooperation that can help all of our people achieve justice and prosperity. This cycle of suspicion and discord must end."

The widely anticipated speech, which was expected to be closely followed by the world's 1.5 billion Muslims, was held at Cairo University and co-hosted by Al-Azhar University. It was the second day of a five-day trip taking the president to the

Middle East and Europe. He met with Saudi King Abdullah June 3 in Riyadh before traveling on to Cairo for meetings with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. (See "Obama Opens Talks with Saudi King Abdullah ( <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2009/June/20090603122657dmslahrellek0.8914148.html&distid=ucs> ).")

White House officials said this trip is an opportunity to continue the president's outreach both in the Middle East and in Europe, and it follows on visits to Washington on May 18 by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian

Authority President Mahmoud Abbas on May 28 on how to resume the stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

### OBAMA ADDRESSES RANGE OF ISSUES



*Somalis watch a live broadcast of a speech from Cairo by President Barack Obama in Mogadishu, Somalia, on Thursday, June 4, 2009. Obama is calling for a new beginning between the United States and Muslims. Obama was speaking at Cairo University in a speech which is the centerpiece of his journey to Egypt. (AP Photo/Farah Abdi Warsameh)*

Obama said that problems the United States and Muslims worldwide confront must be dealt with through partnership and progress, and must be shared. Sources of tension, the president said, must be addressed directly.

The themes Obama addressed in his far-ranging speech began with violent extremism, the threat it poses and what the United States has done in response; the conflict in Afghanistan and Pakistan; Iraq; the Israeli-Palestinian peace process; and the broader issues of democracy and human rights. "Let me

speak as clearly and plainly as I can about some specific issues that I believe we must finally confront together," the president said.

Obama said the United States will confront violent extremists who pose a threat to U.S. national security "because we reject the same thing that people of all faiths reject: the killing of innocent men, women and children." He said that the current situation in Afghanistan demonstrates U.S. goals and the need to work together to end the violence against innocent men, women and children.

The victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States had nothing to do with the political grievances or ideology of al-Qaida, he

said. "And yet al-Qaida chose to ruthlessly murder these people, claimed credit for the attack, and even now states their determination to kill again on a massive scale," the president said.

"None of us should tolerate these extremists."

The president also acknowledged that military power alone will not solve problems in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which is why the United States is investing billions of dollars each year over the next five years to partner with Pakistanis to build

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## Obama Calls for a New Beginning with Muslims Around . . .

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hospitals, schools, roads and businesses, and help those who have been displaced by a militant insurgency. And it is why the United States leads a coalition of nations in Afghanistan to help build the elements of a nation and bring stability and peace to the Afghan people.

A second source of tension the United States and Muslims must confront is the current stalemate between the Israelis, Palestinians and the Arab world. Talks between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators stalled in 2008, and the Obama administration has been working to get them restarted.

"The only resolution is for the aspirations of both sides to be met through two states, where Israelis and Palestinians each live in peace and security," Obama said. "I will personally pursue this outcome. For peace to come, it is time for them — and all of us — to live up to our responsibilities."

For many years, Obama said, the United States and others in Europe and the Middle East have been

working to encourage Iran to halt its nuclear weapons development program. But he said a decisive point has been reached and it is in no one's interest for a devastating nuclear arms race to develop that could lead the Middle East "down a hugely dangerous path."

While it will be difficult to overcome decades of mistrust, the United States, others and Iran must proceed with resolve to end this crisis, Obama said.

### DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The president said that, while no form of government should be imposed on any nation by another, he believes strongly in a system of government that gives voice to the people, and that respects the rule of law and the rights of all.

"Governments that protect these rights are ultimately more stable, successful and secure," he said. "Suppressing ideas never succeeds in making them go away."

In supporting the role of democracy, Obama also called for greater

religious freedom as necessary for peoples of the world to be able to live together.

Obama also encouraged the growth of rights for women, saying that "a woman who is denied an education is denied equality. And it is no coincidence that countries where women are well-educated are far more likely to be prosperous."

The president concludes his trip with a stop in Germany June 5 and France on June 6.

The transcript of Obama's remarks ( <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/June/20090603171549eaifas0.6576807.html> ) is available on America.gov.

What foreign affairs decisions should President Obama consider? Comment on America.gov's blog.

( <http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/2009/01/21/day-2-what-should-obama%e2%80%99s-top-priorities-be/> )

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)* ♦

### Find more information about the speech at the following links:

A new beginning: Engaging the Muslim World  
[http://www.america.gov/obama\\_cairo.html](http://www.america.gov/obama_cairo.html)

Recent media interviews on NPR, Canal + , and BBC in which President Obama talked about his June 4 speech: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing\\_room/PressReleases/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing_room/PressReleases/)

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## High-Level Engagement with Africa Has Started

**By Charles W. Corey**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** — “High-level engagement has already started” between the Obama administration and Africa, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson said May 19.

Speaking at a gala reception in Washington marking the beginning of “Africa Week,” Carson said: “Most of the Obama administration’s Africa team is in place, and we are gearing up. We will continue to build on and strengthen the strong bipartisan consensus in Congress and among the people of America that has motivated U.S. policy towards Africa.”

“Over the next four years, we will be focusing our efforts on strengthening democracy, promoting sustainable development, resolving or mitigating conflict, and dealing with transnational issues such as climate change and agriculture,” he pledged.

Additionally, he said, President Obama was expected to meet shortly with Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete at the White House. “Secretary Clinton will be meeting with the Angolan minister of foreign affairs, Assunção Afonso dos Anjos. She has already met with her Nigerian and South African counterparts. And in July,” Carson said, “the president will be making his first trip to Africa in his current capacity, when he travels to Ghana.”

Earlier that same day, Carson told his audience, on the 16th anniversary of U.S.-Angolan bilateral relations, United States Trade Repre-

sentative Ron Kirk signed the U.S.-Angolan Trade and Investment Framework Agreement with Angolan Minister dos Anjos.



*U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson*

Carson said, “It is anticipated that Secretary Clinton will be traveling to Kenya to participate in the African Growth and Opportunity Act [AGOA] Forum in early August, and possibly visit other countries as well.”

Speaking to a capacity crowd made up of African ambassadors, business executives, Africanists and well-wishers, Carson reminded his audience that “Africa has played and continues to play a major role in the life of the United States and today is one of America’s most important friends and global partners.

“The ties that bind the United States and Africa are stronger and

more enduring today than they have ever been,” he said. Those ties, he added, “extend from the shores of West Africa, where freed American slaves founded the proud state of Liberia, to the White House, where President Barack Obama, the son of a Kenyan father, is now serving as president of this country.”

The links that connect Africa and the United States, he said, are built on a “rock-solid foundation.” He reminded everyone that more than 13 percent of America’s population is of African descent and that that number continues to grow because of immigration laws that have opened the door to a new generation of African immigrants.

“Across the African continent, the trans-Atlantic connections and strong feelings of friendship and good will are kept alive by thousands of African professionals, political leaders and government workers who have been able over the years to travel to the United States to attend our many colleges and universities,” he said.

Volunteer opportunities like the Peace Corps, which sends thousands of Americans to Africa each year, and education opportunities like the Fulbright Program and Humphrey Scholarships, which bring hundreds of Africans to the United States, guarantee that the links that connect Africa and the United States will remain strong well into the future — and may even generate another president of the United States.

Turning to democracy, Carson said, “Africans have always shared U.S.

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## Tanzanian President Welcomed at White House

Washington — President Obama welcomed Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete as the first African head of state to visit him at the White House May 21. The leaders enjoyed “a valuable discussion on a range of issues,” the White House announced.



*President Obama welcomes Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete*

President Obama, a White House press release notes, expressed his appreciation for the close bilateral relationship the United States shares with Tanzania.

Additionally, President Kikwete and the president, according to the release, exchanged views on ap-

proaches to enhancing the U.S.–Tanzanian partnership, improving development policy in the fields of health, education and agriculture, and working with other partners in the region to solve some of the most pressing conflicts on the African continent.

President Obama and President Kikwete also expressed a desire to work together to solve common problems in the future.

*(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦*

## Renovated Wahil Clinic to Improve Community Health Care . . .

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people across the region. The Ambassador and the Colonel joined regional and local officials to dedicate the new facility. The renovations to the health clinic included the renovation and repair of the latrines, and the installation of a new cistern and plumbing. The project cost approximately U.S. \$212,000 and included renovation of the main clinic building, generator shed, staff building, installation of a 30 kW generator and bio-waste incinerator, four small toilets, and the installation of a new 20,000 liter cistern. In addition, windows with mosquito screens were also installed. The clinic was identified for renovation by the Dire Dawa Health Bureau. In response to the Health Bureau's request, CJTF-HOA civil affairs team members worked with the contractor to complete the project in just over twelve months.

The newly completed facility will improve local health care for the people of Wahil and citizens throughout the Oromo District. The next nearest health clinic is 75 kilometers away in Dire Dawa. The work of CJTF-HOA's service members contributes to United States Government efforts to promote a better tomorrow for all Ethiopians through projects to support clean water, functional schools, better roadways and improved medical facilities. CJTF-HOA's development projects are part of a strategy of Cooperative Conflict Prevention, and contribute to the task force's overall mission to build security capacity, promote regional cooperation, and protect



*Ambassador Yamamoto speaking at the event*

coalition interests to prevail against extremist activities.

Last year, the U.S. Government invested more than U.S.\$350 million to improve health care and infrastructure in Ethiopia through a variety of programs, including the President's Plan for Emergency AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), USAID, CDC, Peace Corps, and such CJTF-HOA projects as the Wahil Clinic. ♦

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## Obama, Palestinian President Abbas Discuss Peace Talks

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — Saying time is critical in the Middle East peace talks, President Obama urged the Israelis and Palestinians to resume negotiations because the absence of peace is impeding “a whole host of other areas of increased cooperation and more stable security” for the region and the United States.

“We can’t continue with a drift, with the increased fear and resentments on both sides, the sense of hopelessness around the situation that we’ve seen for many years now,” Obama said at a May 28 joint press briefing with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. “We need to get this thing back on track.”

Abbas agreed with Obama, saying that “what is needed right now is to resume the discussions with the current Israeli government.”

Obama met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu May 18 at the White House and discussed the peace process at length in a long Oval Office session. He repeated the process May 28 with Abbas.

The president will meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on June 4 in Cairo, where he is also planning to give a major speech directed at the Muslim world. “Certainly the issue of Middle East peace is something that is going to need to be addressed. It is a critical factor in the minds of Arabs in

countries throughout the region and beyond the region,” Obama said.

Obama said he told Netanyahu that each party to the peace process has obligations under the road map developed in June 2002, which includes a requirement for Israel to stop developing settlements in the West Bank. The road map — which



*Palestinian Authority President Abbas, left, and President Obama answer reporters' questions during a brief press conference May 28.*

was developed by the United States, European Union, Russia and the United Nations (known collectively as the Quartet) — calls for the creation of a Palestinian state living at peace alongside Israel.

“I’ve been a strong believer in a two-state solution that would provide the Israelis and Palestinians the peace and security that they need,” Obama said. “I am very appreciative that President Abbas shares that view. And when Prime Minister Netanyahu was here last week I reiterated to him that the framework that’s been provided by the road map is one that can advance the interests of Israel, can advance

the interests of the Palestinian people, and also can advance the interests of the United States.”

For the Palestinian side, Obama said it is critical for Abbas’ government to continue to take security steps in the West Bank. “Those security steps need to continue because Israel has to have some confidence that security in the West Bank is in place in order for us to advance this process,” Obama said.

In addition to Obama’s speech in Cairo on June 4, the president will also meet with Saudi Arabian officials in Riyadh on June 3 before going to Germany on June 5 and France June 6. He will participate in ceremonies in Normandy on June 6, commemorating the 65th anniversary of the D-Day landings in World War II.

A transcript of remarks by Obama and Abbas ( [http://www.america.gov/st/](http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/May/20090528193259ihecuor0.4826275.html)

[texttrans-english/2009/May/20090528193259ihecuor0.4826275.html](http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2009/May/20090528193259ihecuor0.4826275.html) ) is available on America.gov.

What foreign affairs decisions should President Obama consider? Comment on America.gov’s blog. ( <http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/2009/01/21/day-2-what-should-obama%e2%80%99s-top-priorities-be/> )

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## Global Initiative for Halting Weapons Shipments Gains New Member

**By Deidra Avendasora**  
**Staff Writer**

**Washington** — South Korea's May 26 decision to endorse the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), following North Korea's May 25 nuclear test, is drawing new attention to the global cooperative that aims to stop trafficking in weapons of mass destruction.

Already endorsed by 94 other countries, PSI uses existing national authorities, international law and other frameworks to achieve its goals of halting the flow of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems and related materials. PSI was created in 2003 by the administration of President George W. Bush and has been endorsed by President Obama as part of his global plan to shrink nuclear arsenals, block nuclear testing, stop manufacture of fissile materials for weapons and secure existing nuclear material.

In an April 5 speech in Prague, Obama proposed strengthening and expanding PSI in order to "break up black markets, detect and intercept materials in transit, and use financial tools to disrupt this dangerous trade."

South Korea previously had not joined PSI, citing its wishes not to provoke the North Korean government. However, following North Korea's nuclear test and launches of five short-range missiles from May 25 to May 26, South Korean officials said it now was time to fully participate in the initiative.

"We look forward to working with the South Korean government to stop the proliferation of WMD-related materials worldwide and to

strengthening the initiative for the future," White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said.

Participants in PSI commit to stop the transfer and transport of WMD. When ships, aircraft or land vehicles suspected of carrying WMD are operating in a member's jurisdiction or in international waters or airspace, the member agrees to search the vessel and seize any such cargo — to the extent their national and international laws permit.

An example of PSI cooperation included preventing the export of nuclear material-related equipment and other controlled equipment to Iran's nuclear program, according to a top U.S. Department of State official in 2006.

Participants also agree to streamline shared communication about suspected proliferation activity, dedicate appropriate resources, and coordinate efforts to block shipments of WMD. Members are encouraged to strengthen their relevant national laws as well as relevant international law and frameworks to support these commitments

PSI members have conducted 37 marine and air joint interdiction exercises since the program's inception. Three more exercises are planned later this year near the Panama Canal, the Gulf, and South China Sea.

PSI was created partly as a response to legal shortcomings that prevented the seizure of ballistic missile parts being transported by a North Korean-flagged ship to Yemen in December 2002, according to a 2008 Congressional Research Service report. A Spanish warship, acting on a tip from Ameri-

can intelligence, halted and boarded the vessel *So San*. The ship was operating in international waters, and its name was not listed in North Korea's registry, providing Spain with legal right to request boarding and a search. According to reports, inspectors found 15 complete Scud-like missiles, 15 warheads, and a missile fuel oxidizer hidden under cement. However, U.S. and Spanish authorities did not have a legal basis to seize the cargo, and the ship was released. Yemen claimed ownership of the missiles and reportedly promised it would not retransfer the items or purchase additional missiles from North Korea.

Participants in the PSI are: Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, The Bahamas, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, San Marino, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, and Yemen. ♦



## U.S., China Cooperating to Help Shape Global Economic Recovery

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner says China and the United States are working together to help shape a global strategy to contain the current economic crisis and lay a foundation for a rapid recovery.

In a speech at Peking University June 1, Geithner said the combined aggressive policy actions of China, the United States and other major economies have helped to slow the pace of economic deterioration, repair the financial system and improve confidence for the business sector.

"At the G20 leaders meeting in London in April, we agreed on an unprecedented program of coordinated policy actions to support growth, to stabilize and repair the financial system, to restore the flow of credit essential for trade and investment, to mobilize financial resources for emerging market economies through international financial institutions, and to keep markets open for trade and investment," Geithner said.

As a consequence of these recovery efforts, there are some initial signs of improvement, Geithner said. "The global recession seems to be losing force," he said. "In the United States, the pace of decline in economic activity has slowed." In addition, the financial system is also beginning to heal, the treasury

secretary said, and the recent stress test of 19 major U.S. banks helped improve market confidence in them, which helped the banks raise additional capital from private investors. And, he said, the security markets have begun to rebound. "These are important signs of sta-

"In the United States, we are putting in place the foundations for restoring fiscal sustainability," Geithner said. "As we recover from this unprecedented crisis, we will cut our fiscal deficit, we will eliminate the extraordinary governmental support that we have put in place

to overcome the crisis, we will continue to preserve the openness of our economy, and we will resolutely maintain the policy framework necessary for durable and lasting, sustained, noninflationary growth."

Geithner said Chinese President Hu Jintao and President Obama agreed in April at the London financial summit to establish the Strategic and Economic Dialogue, which will meet later this summer in Washington.

Geithner also announced that he is appointing David Loevinger as the department's executive secretary and senior coordinator for China affairs and the Strategic and Economic Dialogue. He announced that David Dollar will be the economic and financial emissary to China.

Loevinger now serves as Treasury's minister-counselor for financial affairs in China, responsible for engaging with his Chinese counterparts on such issues as financial regulation, monetary policy and exchange rate policy. Dollar, based in Beijing since 2004, now is the World Bank's country director for China and Mongolia. He will remain based in China, while Loevinger will be based in Washington. ♦



*Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner, third from right, led a U.S. delegation to meetings with Chinese officials June 1 in Beijing.*

bility, and assurance that we will succeed in averting financial collapse and global deflation, but they represent only the first steps in laying the foundation for recovery," Geithner said. "The process of repair and adjustment is going to take time."

Geithner assured the audience that Chinese assets invested in U.S. Treasury securities are safe and that the United States will begin working on its deficit after the economic recovery is certain. Some in China have expressed concern for the amount of Treasury securities held by the Chinese government, which is \$768 billion as of March based on current data.



## Obama Administration Breaks New Ground on the Internet

By Jane Morse  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — During his presidential campaign, Barack Obama impressed Americans and the world with his deft use of the Internet and social networking technologies. Now his administration is using the Internet to make government more accessible and include citizens in the policymaking process.

The Open Government initiative, announced by the White House May 21, calls for more citizen participation to enhance government effectiveness and for greater collaboration across all levels of government and with the private sector to harness innovative tools. It provides an online platform allowing Americans to share and evaluate ideas on how to make government information more accessible.

The idea was conceived the day after Obama took office, when he issued the Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government. The memorandum calls for greater government transparency, which, it said, promotes accountability.

In announcing the Open Government effort, Valerie Jarrett, senior adviser and assistant to the president for intergovernmental affairs and public engagement, said the initiative will help achieve “a new foundation for our government — a foundation built on the values of transparency, accountability and responsibility.”

President Obama, she said, “believes that effective policy benefits from the best available information in society, and that the expertise from a diverse segment of

Americans will strengthen government policies and approaches.”

Vivek Kundra, White House chief information officer, and Beth Noveck, deputy chief technology officer for Open Government, described the initiative as a “sea change from conventional practice.”

Finally, the White House chief tech-

ideas from the initial brainstorming period will be put on a weblog for discussion, Kundra and Noveck said. Then on June 15, Americans will be invited to use a wiki to draft recommendations in a collaborative fashion.



*White House Web sites aim to provide Americans with more access to government information.*

On the White House blog, they said: “We are not asking for comments on an already-finished set of draft recommendations, but are seeking fresh ideas from you (the American people) early in the process of creating recommendations. We will carefully consider your comments, suggestions and proposals.”

Americans, they explained, may offer their recommendations for the Open Government initiative via the White House Web site and vote on suggested ideas. As of May 28, the White House had received more than 900 submissions and 33,000 votes.

On June 3, the most compelling

nology officer, in coordination with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and the U.S. General Services Administration, will review the public recommendations before issuing directives that will guide federal agencies in implementing the final initiatives into their daily practices.

### FEDERAL AGENCIES MAKING INFORMATION MORE ACCESSIBLE

Although virtually all federal agencies maintain their own Web sites, the fact that the information they contain is fragmented across multiple sites and formats can make it difficult for users to track down the information they need.

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## Obama Administration Breaks New Ground on the Internet . . .

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In an effort to resolve this problem, the Federal Chief Information Council, a federal interagency forum aiming to improve information technology management, launched a new Web site called Data.gov.

Office of Management and Budget Director Peter Orszag described Data.gov as “a one-stop shop for free access to data generated across all federal agencies.”

“Data.gov will open up the workings of government by making economic, healthcare, environmental, and other government information available on a single website, allowing the public to access raw data and transform it in innovative ways,” Orszag said on the White House blog May 21. Data.gov, he said, is part of President Obama’s commitment to “democratizing information.”

But Data.gov is also expected to help government agencies operate more efficiently and save tax dollars, Orszag said. “Through live data feeds, agencies will have the ability to easily access data both internally and externally from other agencies, which will allow them to maintain higher levels of performance,” he said.



*Presidential adviser Valerie Jarrett said new White House Web initiatives will build a new foundation for government transparency.*

In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Office of Management and Budget, as part of the Open Government initiative, launched Regulations.gov Exchange ( <http://www.regulations.gov/exchange/> ), a Web site for taking public input on the best ways to achieve public participation in federal agency rulemaking.

Additionally, the White House continues to seek public input via the Federal Register. First launched in 1934 in print form and now accessible on the Internet, the Federal Register is the U.S. government’s

official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, notices issued by federal entities, executive orders and other presidential documents. (See “U.S. Federal Register Informs Citizens of Government Actions ( <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2006/March/20060315161149abretnuh0.8446314.html> ).”)

The White House is showcasing information innovations on its Web site, Innovations Gallery ( <http://www.whitehouse.gov/open/innovations/> ). More information is available about the Open Government initiative ( <http://www.whitehouse.gov/open/> ) on the White House Web site.

The full text of the January Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government ( [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/TransparencyandOpenGovernment/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/TransparencyandOpenGovernment/) ) also is available on the White House Web site.

*(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦*

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## State's McHale to Spearhead U.S. Global Public Engagement

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

**Washington** — Judith McHale, President Obama's selection to spearhead the government's public outreach to global audiences, says the United States needs to engage the people of the world in new and innovative ways.

"I believe passionately that public diplomacy is both integral to our foreign policy and essential for our national security," McHale, a former international media executive, said at her recent Senate confirmation hearing. The U.S. Senate confirmed McHale as the new under secretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs on May 21. A significant part of her job will be to guide the government in informing global audiences and helping them understand U.S. policies.

"We have to do a better job reaching out, of connecting with publics around the world, of communicating with them in every aspect that we do," she said in a May 27 interview with America.gov.

McHale understands well the breadth and reach of global communications from more than 20 years in the cable television industry. She was the president and chief executive officer of Discovery Communications for two decades and was a leader in building the global media company, which is the parent company of the Discovery Channel and other properties, into an enterprise with 1.4 billion subscribers in 170 countries and 35 languages.

"I am frequently asked why Discovery was so successful internationally, and I think the key to that suc-



*Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Judith McHale*

cess was ... in the way we approached it. We really made a big effort to understand what people were looking for, how they heard the messages, how they wanted to receive their information, what they were looking for, and we really looked at them as our partners," she said. "We did a lot to understand their cultures."

That is the approach McHale said will guide her in spearheading U.S. public diplomacy programs that cover three bureaus within the State Department. She said public diplomacy should aim to speak to foreign audiences' aspirations and interests, providing information and services they value and positioning the United States as a partner working toward shared solutions to common challenges.

McHale, a political science graduate of the University of Nottingham in Britain and the Fordham University Law School in New York, developed her understanding of foreign affairs

as the daughter of a U.S. diplomat who was stationed in Britain and apartheid-era South Africa, experiences that helped to shape McHale's world view.

In order to secure U.S. strategic interests in the current international environment, "the United States must continue to move beyond traditional government-to-government diplomacy and seek innovative ways to communicate and engage directly with foreign publics," McHale said.

### NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGY

New media technology and social networking are vital to achieving those long-term goals, McHale said.

"We have to get to a state where we can connect with literally billions of people around the world, and there's simply not going to be a way to do that unless we use all the tools that are at our fingertips," she said.

"We have to use technology where it's appropriate. We have to understand what technologies are appropriate in a particular market," McHale said. But she added that technology itself is a tool, and not a strategy for communicating.

McHale said in her testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "new technology, used effectively and creatively, can be a game changer." The technology provides the government with an opportunity to apply a new model of engaging interactively and collaboratively across lines that might have divided the United States from global audiences.

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Telling America's story

**State's McHale to Spearhead U.S. Global Public Engagement . . .**

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"We must create an institutional framework that can take full advantage of new media, with an understanding that these tools must be carefully tailored to particular circumstances and always used in the service of a larger strategy."

McHale also said she believes that reaching out to global audiences is not something the government can or should do alone. "We face large challenges and stretched resources. We must take full advantage of public-private partnerships, which can serve as significant force multipliers for our efforts," she testified.

What foreign affairs decisions should the Obama administration consider? Comment on America.gov's blog ( <http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/2009/01/21/day-2-what-should-obama%e2%80%99s-top-priorities-be/> ).

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**High-Level Engagement with Africa Has Started . . .**

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values and principles about democracy, and African governments are in the process of consolidating the democratic gains of the recent past."

In January 2009, Carson noted, Ghana saw its fourth successful election and second peaceful transfer of power from one party to another, and in South Africa, the election in April of President Jacob Zuma marked the fourth successful election since the end of the apartheid era.

"Ghana's and South Africa's elections are two of the most recent marquee events showcasing the winds of change that have swept the continent," he said, "but they

are far from the only ones. The elections also demonstrate that democracy is not a one-time event, but a process."

America's ties with Africa are also based on a strong strategic and economic foundation, Carson said. "Today, approximately 17 percent of America's oil imports come from Africa, with Nigeria supplying some 8 percent of America's needs, followed by major imports from Angola, Algeria and Equatorial Guinea."

Nigeria, Angola and Algeria provide 98 percent of liquefied natural gas imports into the eastern United States, he noted.

"In the months to come," Carson told his audience, "I look forward

to getting reacquainted with those of you that I already know, and to meeting for the first time those I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting. Please again accept my congratulations for a successful Africa Week 2009."

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